Permission to states to import Modern weapons

5752. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some state Government have sought the permission of the Union Government for import of modern equipment for their police forces direct from foreign countries in order to meet the challenge posed by the militants;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether that permission has been given; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) to (d). The requirements of the State Governments for modern weapons are met by the Ministry of Home Affairs through Ministry of Defense and/or Ordnance factory Board. As regards import of equipment, requests for issue of custom Duty Exemption certificates are received from the State Governments from time to time. They are decided on merits.

Bio-Technology

5753. SHRI AMAL DATTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the potential of bio-technology has so far been exploited in respect of agriculture, pisciculture and animal husbandry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action plan drawn up for the exploitation of bio-technology in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K.C. LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Eighteen R & D projects and six centres for Plant Molecular Biology on crops like rice, chick pea, brassica and wheat have been set up.

Techniques for somaclonal variation have been used for inducing genetic variability in mustard, rice and sugarcane. Work on tissue culture of horticultural crops has been undertaken.

Biotechnology programmes for crop improvement, animal health care, feed production and upgradation of quality of fish germ plasm are to be srengthened. Now R&D programmes for mass multiplication of economically important forest trees may be taken up.

World Bank Loan for Gas Flaring Reduction Project

5754. SHRI ANNA JOSHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the terms and conditions of the loan being sought from the World Bank for the Gas Flaring Reduction Project;

(b) whether some private companies have offered themselves to tap this gas and distribute it for domestic use in Bombay; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND):(a) The conditions laid down by the World Bank for the project include gas pricing, monitoring of oil & gas field development projects, Forth Round of